Board of Education
May 10, 2022 – Regular Meeting
via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Alexander Oliphant, Vice Chair Mary Tomasi, Donna Antonaccio, Margo Gignac, Christopher Rivers, Rosemary Gignac.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jessica Morozowich.

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Interim Superintendent Dr. Thomas McDowell, Bacon Academy Principal Matt Peel, Colchester Elementary School Principal Judy O'Meara, Jack Jackter Intermediate School Principal Elise Butson, William J. Johnston Middle School Principal Chris Bennett, Director of Teaching and Learning Charles Hewes, Director of Human Resources Shannon Ramsby, Director of Technology Darren Smith, Director of Educational Operations Mario Hurtado, Chief Financial Officer M. Cosgrove, Board of Finance Chair Andrea Migliaccio.

1. MEETING OPENING

1.1. Call to Order
Chair Alexander Oliphant called this Regular Meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

1.2 Roll Call
Chair Oliphant established a quorum with a roll call of members.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance
The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Oliphant.

2. ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

2.1 No additions or changes were requested.

3. RECOGNITIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

3.1. Letter of thanks to CES Staff from Ukrainian National Home of Hartford
Letter of thanks from the Ukrainian National Home of Hartford to CES staff for their donations of teddy bears, toothbrushes, and toothpaste for the children of Ukraine. This initiative was led by Lura Rafala.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Board of Finance Mike Egan has received correspondence from citizens regarding the BOE Chair not supporting the current BOE budget.

Board of Finance Chair Andrea Migliaccio welcomed Dr. McDowell.

5. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

5.1 Superintendent Update
Dr. McDowell stated that he had spent this week meeting with the Administration and touring the buildings. He stated he is impressed with the Board members and while it is difficult work and an awesome responsibility he thanked all for the warm welcome. He felt the buildings were outstanding and looked forward to having fun and working with everyone.

5.2 Substitute Rate

Dr. McDowell presented the Board members with the area substitute rates noting that Colchester pays a low rate. At this time, it is difficult to fill the positions. Dr. McDowell is recommending $125 per diem for certified and $100 for non-certified personnel.
Motion by: M. Tomasi
to raise the substitute rate to $125 per diem for certified teachers.
Second by: D. Antonaccio.

D. Antonaccio noted that there is a signing bonus in place at this time. Dr. McDowell stated the signing bonus would go away if the rate is raised.

C. Rivers asked how many positions are usually needed. Dr. McDowell answered six or eight are usually not filled. These unfilled positions affect learning. Principal O'Meara stated that it is a real struggle when personnel must be pulled from classrooms to fill a vacancy.

5.3 Superintendent Search

Dr. McDowell noted information has been sent to three search companies per Board policy. The Board members will meet and interview the search companies and the selected company will screen candidates to be interviewed by the Board.

6. PRIORITY DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

6.1 Bacon Academy Field Trip to Block Island/Newport RI

Principal Peel said this is an annual tradition for the Senior Class Trip and is scheduled for June 3, 2022. There will be chaperones and close supervision.
Motion by: M. Tomasi
to approve the BA Senior Class Trip to Block Island on June 3, 2022.
Second by: R. Gignac.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

6.2 BA Choir and Band Trip to Disney

This trip to Walt Disney World, FL is from March 24-28, 2023, students will have lessons from professionals and compete in competitions.
Motion by: R. Gignac
to approve the Disney trip for the BA Choir and Band from March 25-28, 2023.
Second by: M. Tomasi.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

6.3 CES PTO Playground Donation

The PTO has donated $4,785 for the CES Playground equipment.
Motion by: D. Antonacci
to approve the CES PTO Playground Donation.
Second by: C. Rivers.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

6.4 BA Robotics Team Donation from Tsunami Tsolutions

Tsunami Tsolutions has donated $1,000 to the Robotics Team. This program is run on

donations and volunteers at no expense to the taxpayers. The approximate cost each year is $30,000 for materials, travel, food, etc.
Motion by: M. Tomasi
to approve the donation from Tsunami Tsolutions.
Second by: R. Gignac.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

6.5 Fundraising Approval Request – BA Mattress
This fundraiser is for the benefit of both the boys and girls varsity golf teams at BA and the band program.
Motion by: C. Rivers
to approve the BA Fundraiser for golf and band.
Second by: M. Gignac.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

6.6 CES Material Removal Request
Motion by: M. Gignac
to approve Colchester Elementary School's request to remove outdated teaching material.
Second by: R. Gignac.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

6.7 WJJMS Material Removal Request
Motion b: M. Tomasi
to approve William J. Johnston Middle School's request to remove outdated mathematics textbooks.
Second by: R. Gignac.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

6.8 Pfizer Community Grant Application Request
This grant is in the amount of $4,700 for robotics materials.
Motion by: D. Antonaccio
to approve the Pfizer Community Grant application submission for Innovations.
Second by: C. Rivers.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

6.9 Discussion on Eliminating Individual Committees and establishing a committee of the whole
Dr. McDowell suggested this item be tabled to have time to look into the reasoning.
Motion by: R. Gignac
to table this item to allow time to further research.
Second by: M. Tomasi.
Vote: Unanimous to approve to table.

6.10 Discussion on the Conditions of the Fields at Bacon Academy
Dr. McDowell will ask M. Hurtado to look into three quotes to bring the fields back to a safe condition.

6.11 Discussion on Transportation Policy 3541.3
D. Antonaccio proposed a change to the policy to increase the distance students walk to

school and to a further distance before bus pickup. This proposal is intended to save money. Dr. McDowell said it would also require a renegotiation of a contract that is in place. Dr. McDowell will look at state guidelines for further information.

7. BUDGET COMMITTEE

7.1 Monthly Budget Reports

CFO M. Cosgrove reviewed the overall budget report. A new business manager will be in place before M. Cosgrove retires. Unexpected expenses are being incurred with interim Special Education and Interim Superintendent positions in place.

7.2 Cafeteria Fund

M. Cosgrove also reviewed the Cafeteria Fund with month to month comparisons.

7.3 Budget Transfers under $5,000

This transfer of $1000 is from travel and fees due to less travel because of Covid. The transfer is to pay for an unexpected cost of an excessive number of students qualifying for CMEA. There are usually two or three students, this year there are eight students.

7.4 Budget Transfers over $5,000

M. Hurtado explained the upgrades must be completed to qualify for a ten year extension on replacement of the tank. The transfer will be from a savings in the electrical accounts at CES, WJJMS and BA.

Motion by: M. Gignac
to approve the transfer of $30,000 from electric accounts at the above schools to the Building Equipment/Repairs account.
Second by: R. Gignac.

It was noted that JJIS electric account will also be involved in the transfer.

The motion was amended to read:
Motion by: M. Gignac
to approve the transfer of $30,000 from electric accounts at CES, JJIS, WJJMS and BA to the Building Equipment/Repairs account.
Second by: R. Gignac
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

7.5 Capital Reserve

M. Cosgrove reviewed the Capital Reserve Account

7.6 Use of Schools

M. Cosgrove reviewed the revenue and associated costs for the use of the schools. The revenue is down due to the restricted use of the schools during Covid-19.

7.7 Update on Underground Storage Tank and Oil Spill at BA

M. Hurtado stated the remediation work has been completed. No further spillage is expected. There will be further tests this summer.

8. GRANTS/OTHER FINANCIALS – None

9. CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

9.1 Selection of Committee Chair

9.2 Selection of Committee Secretary

Motion by: R. Gignac
to table Item 9.1 and 9.2 for further information.
Second by: M. Tomasi.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

9.3 Training BOE Responsibilities Regarding Curriculum
Dr. Hewes gave a presentation to the Board explaining what curriculum is, how curriculum is developed and what the Board's responsibility is.

10. POLICIES/REGULATIONS FOR A SECOND READING

10.1 6162.6P Use of Copying Devices
10.2 9123B Secretary of the Board
10.3 6115P Ceremonies and Observances
10.4 9221 Filling Vacancies on the Board

Motion by: M. Tomasi
to approve Items 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 and 10.4.
Second by: C. Rivers.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

11. POLICIES RECOMMENDED FOR REMOVAL (NONE)

12. NON-SUBSTANTIVE POLICIES (NONE)

13. CONSENT AGENDA

13.1 Approval of March 29, 2022 BOE Regular Meeting Minutes
13.2 Approval of April 1, 2022 BOE Special Meeting Minutes
13.3 Approval of April 14, 2022 BOE Special Meeting Minutes
13.4 Approval of April 25, 2022 BOE Special Meeting Minutes
13.5 Approval of April 27, 2022 BOE Special Meeting Minutes
13.6 Approval of April 29, 2022 BOE Special Meeting Minutes
13.7 Approval of May 2, 2022 BOE Special Meeting Minutes

Motion by: M. Tomasi
to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.
Second by: M. Gignac.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

14. REPORTS FROM BOARD COMMITTEES

14.1 Policy – No further report
14.2 Budget – No further report
14.3 Personnel – M. Tomasi said a meeting is scheduled for June.
14.4 Curriculum – No report
14.5 Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – C. Rivers working on goals at next meeting.
14.6 Ad Hoc Survey Development Committee – A survey is being developed.

15. REPORTS FROM BOARD LIAISONS

15.1 Reports from Board Liaisons

1. BOS Donna Antonacci - No report
2. BOF - Marg Gignac – Ongoing BOF meetings regarding the budget.
3. P&R Parent Commission - C. Rivers – The playground at CES is open after hours.
4. PTO Collaborative - M. Gignac - M. Gignac met with PTOs of three schools. Will bring more information to the next meeting.
5. C3 Collaborative - J. Morozowich – No report
6. Commission on Aging - M. Tomasi – CoA will be holding a Mental Wellness Fair at WJJMS on May 15, 2022 for all ages.
7. CORE Commission - J. Morozowich – No report
8. Youth & Social Services - R. Gignac – No report

16. BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMATION ITEMS

16.1 Communications

A letter was received from Christine McNichols Foley regarding the condition of the athletic fields.

16.2 Next Meetings

Board of Education	June 7, 2022	6:00 PM	Virtual
Policy Committee	May 18, 2022	5:30 PM	Virtual
Budget Committee	June 2, 2022	9:00 AM	Virtual
Personnel Committee	June 6, 2022	5:30 PM	Virtual
Curriculum Committee	June 14, 2022	6:00 PM	Virtual
Ad Hoc Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	June 15, 2022	5:00 PM	Virtual

16.3 Monthly Student Enrollment for April is **2,263** students

17. PUBLIC COMMENT

Andrea Migliaocci stated that she enjoyed this evening's meeting and thanked Dr. Hewes for the presentation on curriculum. As BOF Chair, A. Migliaccio noted that the BOF requested a reduction in the spending to the BOE budget.

18. EXECUTIVE SESSION

18.1 Executive Session to discuss staff leave of absence.

Motion by: D. Antonacci
to go into Executive Session to discuss a request for leave of absence and invite Interim Superintendent Dr. McDowell and Director of Human Resources Shannon Ramsby into the session.
Second by: M. Tomasi.
Vote: Unanimous to approve. Time: 8:24 pm.

Chair Oliphant brought the Board out of Executive Session at 8:41 pm.
See below for any action.

19. BOARD ACTIONS FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion by: M. Tomasi

to approve the leave of absence request.
Second by: M. Gignac.
Vote: Unanimous to approve.

20. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Oliphant adjourned this Regular Meeting at 8:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jane Slade
Recording Secretary